

Introduction

The Memphis Poll provides a forum for citizen input regarding City of Memphis services and public issues. The Memphis Poll presents positive findings about City services as well as problems related to services.

This is the fourteenth annual Memphis Poll and the final report will provide trend information over this time. The full 2007 Memphis Poll report, along with the questionnaire, will be available online at www.memphistn.gov.

Service Priorities

The 2007 Memphis Poll asked citizens to rank the services that they considered most important.

Three services were the highest rated. Police crime protection was the most important priority with an 84 percent score. Funding public schools and providing fire protection were also high priorities for the citizens.

Moderate rated areas were disasters/disease planning, solid waste collection, clean public areas, repairing streets, communicating with citizens, public learning groups, and environmental quality. Citizens rated the following as slightly lower priorities—parks and recreation, revitalizing neighborhoods, and job training.

The very lowest priorities for Memphis citizens included funding improvements to the Liberty Bowl and Pyramid (19 percent), riverfront development (22 percent), building new streets and roads (30 percent), and property tax breaks called PILOTs (36 percent).

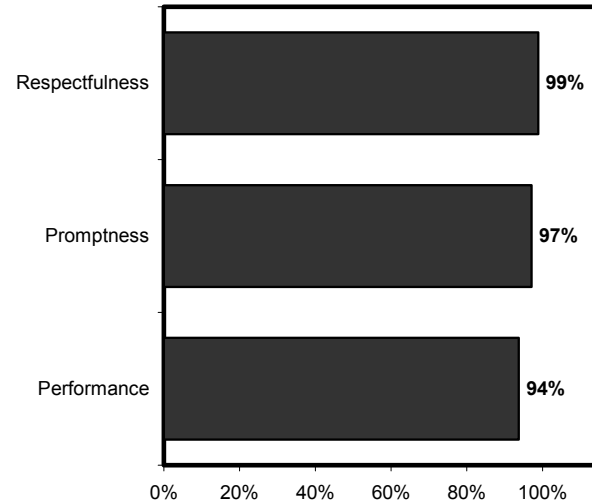
Highly Rated Services

The Poll found a large number of highly rated services. The most prestigious of these services had ratings that were 90 percent or higher.

This year, as with previous years of the Memphis Poll, the most impressive services in the City of Memphis were provided by the Division of Fire Services. Figure 1 shows the scores for responding to fires ranged from 99 percent to 94 percent. The

score for the Division's emergency ambulance services was an impressively high 93 percent.

Figure 1: Citizens' Perceptions of Fire Department



The Pink Palace Museum, Botanic Garden, and The Zoo, programs under the Division of Park Services had an average rating of 96 percent. The library system had an overall score of 93 percent and specifically, the central library scored 97 percent. Memphis, Light, Gas and Water scored over 90 percent for the quality of drinking water and the performance of its field workers.

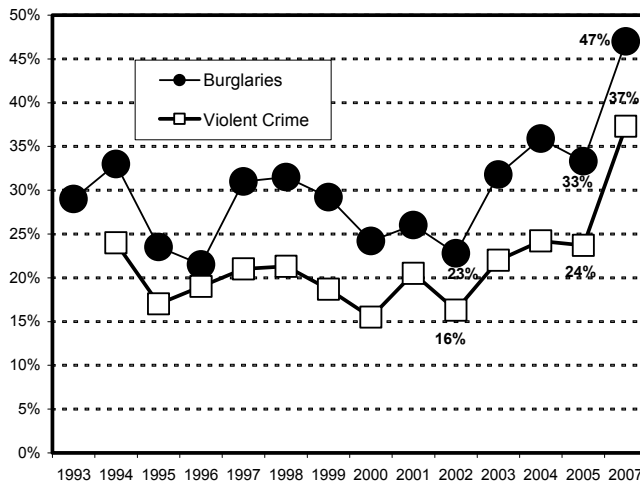
The Division of Public Works had several services that were impressive. Promptness in weekly collection of solid waste was rated at 97 percent, and promptness in collection of recycling was rated at 94 percent.

Community Problems

Citizens' concerns about crime were at an all time high in the 2007 Memphis Poll. It found that 44 percent of the citizens thought crime was increasing. In contrast, only 19 percent of the citizens thought crime was increasing in 2002.

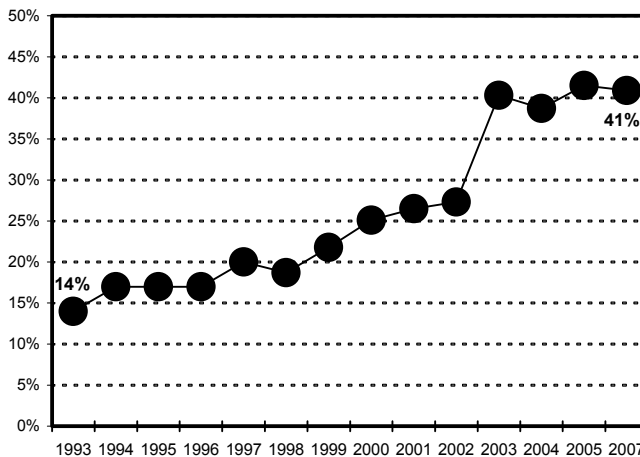
The Memphis Poll asked about specific crimes. Figure 2 shows that 47 percent of the citizens were concerned about burglaries in their neighborhoods and 37 percent were concerned about violent crime in their neighborhoods. The Memphis Poll also found that concerns about gangs and drug sales were at historic high levels.

Figure 2: Citizens' Concerns About Burglaries and Violent Crime



Similarly, citizens were concerned about physical conditions in their neighborhoods. Figure 3 shows that 41 percent of the citizens were concerned about litter. In contrast, the figure shows only 14 percent of the citizens were concerned about litter in 1993. Citizens were also concerned about other physical conditions—39 percent were concerned about the conditions of vacant lots and 35 percent were concerned about loose dogs.

Figure 3: Citizens' Concerns About Litter



Problematic Services

In analyzing this section, the results should be compared to the average score for all City services which was 78 percent.

Citizens thought that the quality of parks' services had declined. Seventy-seven (77) percent of the citizens thought the services were good in 2007. In contrast, 87 percent of the citizens believed the services were good in 2001. Citizens thought the public swimming pools were the second lowest rated City service.

MLGW's cost of utilities was the lowest scoring service in the Memphis Poll. Only 35 percent of the citizens thought that MGLW was doing a good job in delivering this service.

Overall, the Memphis Poll found that the services directly aimed at the neighborhoods were consistently rated below the average for all services. For example, 67 percent thought that the City was doing a good job of maintaining the housing code, 65 percent said the City was doing a good job of helping the neighborhood organizations, and 56 percent believed the City was doing a good job of improving neighborhood shopping centers.

Calling City Hall

Citizens were asked about their satisfaction when calling City Hall regarding their concerns. Citizens were most pleased with the courtesy when they called Housing Code Enforcement or the Public Works Street Office—both scores exceeded 90 percent.

In contrast they were less pleased when calling Solid Waste Management, the Mayor's Citizen Service Center, General Services Weed Office, or MLGW—these scores ranged from 79 to 82 percent.

Citizens were asked about the performance of the agencies in solving their concerns. Citizens were most satisfied with Code Enforcement's response to abandoned vehicles (82 percent) and MLGW (80 percent). Three areas had lower scores—Solid Waste Management, General Services Weed Office, and Public Works Street Office ranged from 68 to 74 percent.

The citizens were least satisfied with the Code Enforcement's assistance with rundown houses. Only 55 percent of the citizens though the City had resolved these problems.